

FIJI BOOSTED BY CRUISE TOURS



Fiji, a South Pacific Ocean's island nation expects new boom in tourism industry thanks to the cruise tours. Recently, first cruise ship visited Port Denarau. Tourism town Nadi sees this as a great opportunity for its tourism sector. The town's Chamber of Commerce makes plans to attract more tourists to Nadi when the next ship arrives. The vessel that caused all the activity was Pacific Dawn, the Australia's largest superliner. She has brought approximately 2000 passengers. Port Denarau Committee welcomed the visitors. The tourists were later

transported by busses for booked tours.

Majority of the visitors, however, preferred to stay in Port Denarau's hospitality facilities and only few of them visited Nadi for shopping. This is the trend Nadi's officials want to change. According to Nadi Mayor, Timoci Koroiqica, they will support any activity that would bring economic returns to the town.

The cruise tourism industry has also support from the country's government. The government plans to build jetties in some of the cruise liners port of calls in the outer islands. The Deputy Secretary for Works Mr. John Rounds will try to improve the berthing facilities.

Ministry of Tourism looks into various plans that should make the nation's tourism sector more attractive. There were plans of re-introduction of the Fiji Police Force Brass. Other proposals spoke of improving organization of the handicraft sellers at the Suva seawall. The country receives more than 400,000 tourists a year and the number continuously grows. The tourism sector is important source of revenue for Fiji. The cruise sector grows quite fast, by some 8 per cent annually; therefore it is very important for Fiji's economy. Fijians believe more cruise tourists will come to visit the island nation this year and that they will provide significant boost to local economy.

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